FBIS DAILY REPORT

MIDDLE EAST & SOUTH ASIA REVIEW

16 JULY 1984

Lebanon

Franjiyah-SSNP Agreement — At a 14 July meeting with Syrian Vice President 'Abd al-Halim Khaddam in Damascus, Robert Franjiyah reached agreement with the leaders of the Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP) on ways to end the "abnormal situation" in the Al-Kurah region and restore cohesion in the north, Damascus radio announced. Robert Franjiyah, the son of former President Sulayman Franjiyah and leader of his "Al-Maradah" militia organization, subsequently confirmed that the two sides had agreed to cease fire and withdraw their gunmen "under the auspices" of the Syrian forces in Lebanon, according to Radio Monte Carlo. SSNP leader In'am Ra'd likewise stressed his party's commitment to the cease-fire and expressed hope that the SSNP will remain allied with Sulayman Franjiyah, the radio noted. Both Ra'd and Robert Franjiyah met with Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad before reaching their cease-fire agreement, according to Damascus television and radio respectively. Radio Monte Carlo said their visit to Damascus came after Al-Asad had warned both sides that Syria would adopt "another stand" unless a comprehensive cease-fire was reached.

The heavy fighting between SSNP and Al-Maradah militia in the villages south of Tripoli followed the SSNP leader's accusation that Sulayman Franjiyah was attempting to establish a separate "canton" in the north, AFP noted. Reporting on the fighting, Voice of Lebanon radio said that 30 people were killed and 250 were wounded in the battles on 14 July and that Franjiyah's palace in Zgharta was subjected to artillery fire the previous day. However, SSNP and Al-Maradah gunmen withdrew from a number of villages in the wake of the Damascus agreement and the Syrian Army entered the vacated areas, the clandestine Radio Free Lebanon reported.

South Lebanon — Three Israeli soldiers were wounded southeast of Sidon in one of four attacks against the IDF on 15 July, according to Jerusalem radio. Earlier, after a meeting of the Lebanese Government's military committee established to draft a plan for the liberation of the south, an official source cited by the Voice of Lebanon explained that the committee's work is part of "the Lebanese preparation for holding talks with Israel." Meanwhile, Syria has indicated to the United States that it desires to begin indirect negotiations with Israel on the evacuation of the IDF from Lebanon, according to IDF radio. Syrian officials recently told a senior U.S. official visiting Damascus that Syria wants the United States to renew its activity as a mediator for the removal of the Israelis from Lebanon, the radio said, and they indicated that Syria would approve Lebanon's attempt to negotiate an Israeli withdrawal provided that the military arrangements reached do not impinge on Lebanon's sovereignty.

Libyan Bureau Attack — An Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman denounced the recent "terrorist" attack on the Libyan People's Bureau in Beirut, according to JANA.

Gulf Conflict

Iranian antiaircraft fire downed an Iraqi plane in the northwest region on 13 July, according to a military communique cited by IRNA. An Iraqi military communique broadcast by Baghdad Voice of the Masses radio countered this claim by reporting that an Iranian "drone" was shot down east of Basra on 15 July. Neither side commented on the other's claims, according to monitored sources. However, an Iranian "informed official" did deny on 14 July an Iraqi claim of an air attack against two vessels in the Persian Gulf the day before, IRNA reported. An Iraqi military communique broadcast by Baghdad Voice of the Masses radio had stated that two "large maritime targets" were "directly and effectively hit" by Iraqi Air Force planes south of Khark Island.

In another development, Iran foiled a "suicide attack" by an Iraqi brigade on 14 July north of Hawr al-Huwayzah in the south, Tehran radio reported. The entire attacking force was "annihilated," the radio added.

PLO Affairs

Algiers Agreement — Fatah and the four Palestinian factions of the Democratic Alliance signed in Algiers on 13 July the agreement earlier reached by the parties in Aden, Algiers radio reported citing a communique read by Fatah official Khalil al-Wazir. Al- Wazir disclosed that Fatah will continue its contacts and meetings with the parties to the dialogue after the final signing, Baghdad Voice of PLO radio noted. A DFLP spokesman denounced the attack on the agreement by "some Palestinian parties in Damascus," the radio added. National Alliance sources in Damascus cited by Radio Monte Carlo had labeled the agreement as "divisionist," and had indicated that the national alliance rejects any plan or agreement that serves the "deviationists and defeatists." In Lebanon's Al-Biqa' valley, Sa'id Musa Muragha, a leader of the "uprising" in Fatah, described the agreement as a "retreat" in the interests of Yasir 'Arafat that will cause dissension, the clandestine Palestinian Voice of National Unity radio reported.

'Arafat in Jordan — Yasir 'Arafat arrived in Amman on 16 July for a 2-day visit in which he will hold talks with King Husayn and high-ranking Jordanian officials, Amman radio reported. In a statement to PETRA reported by the radio, 'Arafat said that he considers the signing of the Algiers agreement to be a big step on the path toward holding the PNC session. He also described Faruq Qaddumi's visit to Damascus as "positive," despite Syrian "propaganda" efforts to "distort" the results. 'Arafat arrived in Amman from Saudi Arabia, where he had met with Saudi King Fahd on 15 July, according to SPA.

Diplomatic Developments

Jordan-Libya — Libyan Foreign Liaison Secretary 'Ali 'Abd as-Salam at-Turayki was received in Amman on 14 July by Jordan's King Husayn and Foreign Minister Tahir al-Masri, PETRA-JNA reported. At-Turayki delivered a letter to King Husayn from Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi concerning joint Arab issues, JANA noted. King Husayn emphasized the need to continue direct bilateral meetings, while Al-Masri reviewed bilateral relations, JANA added. In an interview with AFP, At-Turayki said that nothing currently stands in the way of resuming diplomatic relations between the two countries and that Libya is ready to settle the problem. However, in an interview with the Amman paper *AR-RA'Y*, Jordan's Al-Masri explained that speculation about resuming Jordanian-Libyan relations is "premature" and disclosed that discussions with At-Turayki did not deal with restoration of relations.

Syria-Jordan — A Jordanian parliamentary delegation led by the speaker of the House of Representatives arrived in Damascus to participate in the Arab parliamentary speakers meetings to begin on 16 July, SANA reported. This follows a Syrian delegation's visit to Amman to attend the Arab Economic Unity Council meetings that began on 8 July, as noted by the agency in an earlier report.

Syria-France — French External Relations Minister Claude Cheysson departed Syria on 13 July after meeting with Vice President Khaddam and Foreign Minister Faruq Ash-shar', Damascus radio reported. The talks covered the current situation in the region, the international situation, and bilateral relations.

Iran-Saudi Arabia — Following an invitation by Saudi officials to visit Mecca, Majlis Speaker 'Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsaniani said in a statement of thanks that such meetings can be "beneficial" to bilateral relations, Tehran radio noted. A ranking diplomatic source cited by Radio Monte Carlo disclosed that Hashemi-Rafsanjani accepted the invitation and that the visit will take place within the "next few days."

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Materials on Situation in Jammu, Kashmir

Srinagar: 'No Untoward Incidents'

BK140922 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] Srinagar city continues to be under curfew. There has been no untoward incident anywhere in the city. Life in other parts of Kashmir valley is normal with shops and other establishments and transport working normally.

An official spokesman told our Srinagar correspondent that no political leader has been arrested. The Awami Action Committee leader, Mirwaiz Kashmir Maulana Farooq [name as heard] has denied reports that he was not allowed to offer Friday prayers yesterday. He told the correspondent this morning that he offered prayers at Hazratbal shrine.

Meanwhile, Begum Khalida Shah, the president of the ruling National Conference, has asked the opposition leaders now in Srinagar to try to solve the problems of the people in the state.

Curfew Lifted 14 July

BK141608 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] Srinagar city is now completely curfew free. Curfew has now been lifted from the interior areas as well. Shops and other establishments were open and transport functioned normally. An official spokesman told our Srinagar correspondent that no political leader has been arrested.

The chief minister, Mr Ghulam Mohammad Shah, had another round of talks with the prime minister, Mrs Gandhi, in New Delhi today. The latest situation in the state figured. The deputy leader of the Congress-I legislature party in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly, Mr Janak Raj Gupta, also met Mrs Gandhi.

The pradesh [state] Congress-I general secretary, Mr Mangat Ram Sharma, has criticized the role of the opposition in defending Dr Farooq Abdullah. In a statement in Srinagar, he said that when the country needs united action for defending the integrity, the opposition leaders are supporting Dr Farooq Abdullah, who he alleged, gave shelter to Sikh extremists and secessionist elements.

Cabinet Committee Probing Irregularities

BK150940 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir chief minister, Mr Ghulam Mohammad Shah, disclosed in New Delhi today that his predecessor, Dr Farooq Abdullah, was planning to raise two battalions of Kashmir police to accommodate the workers of the Jamiat-i-Tulba [militant student organization] and other antinational and secessionist elements. He told newsmen before his departure for Srinagar that the previous government had taken several similar decisions without referring to the finance department. There were about 125 cases of serious irregularities involving expenditure of crores of rupees. He said a Cabinet committee is collecting information about all of them.

The committee will also inquire into the previous government's involvement with terrorist and secessionist elements. The deputy chief minister, Mr D.D. Thakur, who heads the 4-member committee, hopes that it will submit its report in a fortnight. The chief minister dismissed Dr Abdullah's alleged disappearance as a gimmick. He said nobody has been arrested, but the curfew had to be imposed to apprehend the extremists and terrorists who had entered Kashmir. The law and order situation is fully under control and the police did not even have to use a stick, let alone resort to firing anywhere, Mr Shah added.

The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh [State] Congress-I chief, Mufti Mohammad Sayeed, said his party's support to Shah ministry is in line with its consistent policy of supporting secular and nationalist forces. At a news conference in New Delhi, he recalled that in 1975 also the party voluntarily gave up power to strengthen the nationalist and secular elements. Congress-I has not been out to power [as heard] but is motivated by national interests and well-being of the people. He said a large section of the National Conference had been watching Dr Farooq Abdullah's dangerous move and openly voicing their displeasure and concern. That is what eventually led to the recent major split in the party. Replying to a question, Mufti Sayeed asserted that the state governor adopted the only democratic option open to him after Dr Abdullah's ministry had been reduced to a minority.

AFP: Abdullah Supporters Dispersed

BK151310 Hong Kong AFP in English 1248 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Excerpts] Srinagar, India, July 15 (AFP) — Security forces fired into the air to disperse supporters of ousted Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah here today, police sources said.

They said a 300-strong crowd held by Dr. Abdullah at his National Conference Party headquarters was preparing to march to a martyrs' memorial when police confronted them.

Spokesman for Dr. Abdullah later said police had arrested 600 party workers, some of them senior. However the police denied it.

The sources said police told Dr. Abdullah that a march would be illegal. But the crowd did not disperse until border security forces fired into the air.

The police said life in the city was normal today after a curfew was lifted last night. Fears among Dr. Abdullah's supporters that he had been arrested ended earlier today when he appeared in public after a 48-hour absence.

Janata Leader Sees Governor

BK151613 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Excerpts] State authorities say they succeeded in persuading Dr Farooq Abdullah from violating section 144 [banning assembly

of five or more persons] and taking out a procession from his party headquarters to the martyrs memorial in the interior city.

The Janata Party leader, Mr George Fernandes, now in Srinagar, called on the governor and protested against the dismissal of Dr Abdullah's government.

Kashmir Security Tightened

BK160749 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 16 Jul 84

[Text] The Jammu and Kashmir government has taken stringent measures to check the entry of extremists into the state. Additional check posts have been set up on its border. The police has been asked to be vigilant round the clock. The steps have been taken in view of the recovery of large quantities of sophisticated weapons at the border town of Punch and the hijacking of the Indian Airlines Airbus from Srinagar to Lahore.

Arms Seized Near Border

BK140916 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, police seized 3 rocket launchers, 2 hand grenades, 1 .303 rifle, and over 250 rounds of ammunition in a raid on a border village at (Bandichachen) in Punch area yesterday.

PTI quotes official sources to say that the weapons were smuggled from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The documents seized along with the weapons revealed that they were meant for subversive activities by extremists in the border area. The seizure is the second largest capture of arms and ammunition.

The police have unearthed a large quantity of weapons including hand grenades from the township of Pampur near Srinagar on 14 May.

Continuing Reportage on Situation in Punjab

Precautionary Curfew in Amritsar

BK151620 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] In Amritsar, curfew has been imposed tomorrow from 0800 to 1600. Stating this in Chandigarh this evening, an official spokesman said this has been done as a precautionary measure.

Seventeen suspected terrorists have been apprehended by security forces in Punjab since yesterday. According to an official spokesman, nine of them were arrested from Ferozepore District and five from Jullundur District. Seven pistols and 250 rounds of ammunition were recovered by security forces from different places. The spokesman said that of these, about 200 rounds were recovered from the debris near Akal Takht [highest seat of Sikhs] in the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar.

AFP: Curfew Follows Threats

BK160519 Hong Kong AFP in English 0419 GMT 16 Jul 84

[Text] New Delhi, July 16 (AFP) — A curfew was imposed on areas around the Golden Temple complex in Amritsar today amid threats by Sikh "suicide squads" to dislodge federal troops from the shrine, PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) reported. Sikh high priests two weeks ago said that "sacrificial squads" would be sent in to liberate the 400 year-old temple, occupied by troops on June 6 in a bloody battle with Sikh militants barricaded inside the complex.

Today's curfew was also imposed in several other parts of the 500,000 population city to prevent Sikhs staging protest marches, PTI said.

The curfews ran from 10 a.m. (1630 GMT) Sunday until 4 p.m. (1030 GMT) today, the agency said.

Yesterday there were reports from Punjab that many middle ranking Sikh leaders and Akali Dal political party chiefs had gone underground to escape arrest in a widespread security clampdown.

It was not possible to contact Amritsar by phone from here today and Indian newspapers gave conflicting reports of the planned Sikh march.

The opposition newspaper *INDIAN EXPRESS* said that Sikh high priests had called off their threat to send in suicide squads after reaching an agreement with the authorities on a troop withdrawal from the temple.

But other newspapers here, citing their own correspondents, said that the march was still on.

About 650 people were killed after the Army moved into Punjab and recaptured the Golden Temple. At least 5,000 people have been arrested in mopping-up operations.

Further on Amritsar Curfew

BK160745 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 16 Jul 84

[Text] In Amritsar, curfew has been imposed since last night as a precautionary measure. An official spokesman said in Chandigarh that the curfew will remain in force till 1600 today. This has been done in view of the Akali Dal's threat to hold demonstrations in Amritsar today. It had earlier been decided to impose the curfew from 0800 this morning. But later the decision was taken to have it from 2200 last night.

The spokesman said some devotees, who went to the Goden Temple this morning, unaware of the curfew, were allowed to go in and offer prayers as a special case.

Meanwhile, security forces have apprehended nine more people since yesterday for involvement in terrorist activities. Some arms and ammunitions have been recovered from them. It has been

revealed that counterfeit dollars worth over 80,000 rupees were recovered from a house in Goraya in Jullundur District.

In Chandigarh, the preliminary examinations for the All India Civil Services passed off peacefully yesterday. The examinations were scheduled to be held last month but were postponed because of the disturbed law and order situation.

Threats Fail To Materialize

BK160751 Hong Kong AFP in English 0734 GMT 16 Jul 84

[Excerpts] New Delhi, July 16 (AFP) — A proposed march by Sikh "sacrificial squads" to dislodge federal troops from their holy Golden Temple in Amritsar failed to materialize today, local journalists said. Some of them attributed the march's failure to appear to a curfew that was imposed in the area.

Other reports said that the Sikh political party Akali Dal had postponed the march after reaching an agreement with authorities on a troop withdrawal, but this could not be confirmed.

"Till 12 A.M. (0630 GMT) there was no report of the Sikh march," said a journalist contacted by telephone in Amritsar.

The journalists said that a strict curfew had been in force on the 500,000 population city since last night. The curfew ran from 10 P.M. (1630 GMT) Sunday until 4 P.M. (1030 GMT) today, PRESS TRUST OF INDIA (PTI) said.

Sikh high priests two weeks ago said that "sacrificial squads" would be sent in to liberate the 400-year-old temple, occupied by troops on June 6 in a bloody battle with Sikh militants barricaded inside the complex.

About 650 people were killed after the Army moved into Punjab and recaptured the Golden Temple. At least 5,000 people have been arrested in mopping up operations. Militant Sikhs have been campaigning for nearly two years for political and religious autonomy in Punjab.

Sikh Women Occupy Shrine

BK160854 Hong Kong AFP in English 0837 GMT 16 Jul 84

[By Dilip Ganguly]

[Excerpts] Amritsar, India, July 16 (AFP) — Sixty Sikh women were entrenched inside a shrine near the Golden Temple here today waiting to "liberate" the 400-year-old shrine from the Indian Army as soon as a curfew was to (?be lifted) later, group spokesman said.

They were the first batch of Sikh "sacrificial squads" who have vowed to march to the shrine from today in response to a call by (?leaders) of their political party, the Akali Dal.

The march was to start this morning, but strict curfew imposed on this 500,000 population city since last night forced them to postpone it till 4.30 p.m. (1130 GMT), Rajinder Kaur said. "We will march when the curfew is withdrawn," Mrs. Kaur said.

The volunteers assembled last night inside Baba Deep Singh Gurwadra — one of the Sikh historical temples on the southern outskirts of the Golden Temple.

The curfew was imposed after repeated administration requests to give up the march failed. In force across the city, the curfew is scheduled to end at 4 p.m. (1100 GMT) but informed sources said that it might be extended.

The volunteers are all unarmed and Mrs. Kaur had said they would protest in the non-violent way of Mahatma Gandhi.

Informed sources said that the women would be arrested if they broke the curfew by coming out from the shrine.

(In New Delhi, police today arrested a 14-member women's "sacrificial squad" after they emerged from a Sikh shrine near Parliament shouting slogans against the government and Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. They were en route to the Golden Temple.

(A large number of policemen were posted outside the shrine as a precaution against violence and traffic in adjacent roads was diverted.

(Many Sikh youths followed the group to the gate of the shrine.

(The women were arrested for defying orders prohibiting the assembly of more than four people in public in the area.)

Amritsar Curfew Extended

BK161252 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 16 Jul 84

[Text] In Amritsar, the curfew has been further extended by 12 hours till 0400 tomorrow. The curfew was imposed in the city last night as a precautionary measure in view of the threat by Akali leaders to hold a demonstration in Amritsar. Meanwhile, the security forces have apprehended 22 more persons suspected to be involved in terrorist activities. According to an official spokesman in Chandigarh, some arms and ammunition have also been recovered from them. In New Delhi, some Sikh women were arrested outside the Bangla Saheb gurdwara [Sikh temple] for violating the prohibitory orders today. They were demanding the withdrawal of security forces from the Golden Temple complex.

Pakistani Arrested in Punjab

BK140826 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] In Punjab, 11 more suspected terrorists have been apprehended from different places in the state. Some arms and ammunition were recovered from their possession. Those apprehended include one Pakistani national, who was arrested from a village in Amritsar District.

INDIAN EXPRESS Attacks Gandhi's Kashmir 'Gamble'

BK131250 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 3 Jul 84 p 6

[Editorial: "Dangerous Gamble"]

[Text] It could be seen coming, only the timing was uncertain. Farooq Abdullah's dismissal and the swearing in of his brother-in-law and rival, Mr G.M. Shah, has plunged Jammu and Kashmir [J&K] into more than ordinary political turmoil. Kashmiris in particular will be quick to recall 1953 and will tend to see in Farooq's ouster the nefarious undoing of his popular mandate in confirmation of Shaykh Abdullah's political will.

The National Conference [NC] split in J&K dramatically extended to the legislature party on Monday, with 12 MLA's withdrawing their support from Mr Farooq Abdullah, reducing his government to a minority. The NC dissidents and an independent informed the Governor, Mr Jagmohan, that they had pledged their support to Mr G.M. Shah who immediately staked a claim to form a government on the assurance of Congress (I) backing. The two combined will have a razor thin majority of39 (13 plus 26) in a House of 77. Mr Abdullah, clearly surprised by this sudden betrayal took his stand on the provisions of the J&K constitution and properly asked for a meeting of the legislature where his majority might be tested. His plea that defectors cannot vote under a new J&K law may have been questioned as the dissidents claimed to be a breakaway group, indeed, the authentic NC, not defectors. Without evidence of coercion or inducement, this position could not be easily faulted. In the alternative, Mr Abdullah wrote to the governor, seeking dissolution of the 13 month old Assembly for which he claimed mandatory sanction under the J&K system and the 1977 precedent.

In dismissing Mr Abdullah, the governor has laid himself open to the charge of joining a conspiracy in which the Centre's hand will be seen. No doubt, Mr Shah was hard at work to wean away Mr Abdullah's supporters — and succeeded. But not without assurance of Congress (I) support and the lure of office. The Congress (I) had for months sought to topple Mr Abdullah but the former Governor, Mr B.K. Nehru, was not willing. More recently, a post-Punjab campaign was once more mounted by assailing Mr Abdullah's record and insinuating seditious connections — a reckless charge, hotly denied. The reactions to Abdullah's ouster have been predictably strong and angry mobs, infiltrated by dubious elements, have indulged in pro-Pakistan and Khalistan slogans and violence. Whether and how Mr Shah will be able to pacify roused emotions and project his own credibility remains to be seen. Meanwhile, Mrs Gandhi has undertaken a most dangerous gamble and bought new trouble in destabilising J&K at a time when the country is already facing heavy weather.

Special Courts To Be Set Up To Try Terrorists

BK141257 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1230 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] The president today promulgated an ordinance empowering the center to set up special courts for the trial of terrorists. It will be applicable in areas declared as terrorist-affected. The entire country except Jammu and Kashmir will come under its purview. The ordinance empowers the central government to declare any area as terrorist-affected following which special courts could be established for trial of offences like waging war against the state, abetting mutiny, spreading enmity between classes, acting against national integrity and indulging in murder, dacoity [robbery] and hijacking.

A special court will be presided over by a serving district and session judge to be appointed by the central government with the concurrence of the chief justice of the state concerned. The trial will generally be held in camera. Appeals against the orders of the special court can be filed in the Supreme Court, which will also have the power to transfer a case from one special court to another.

Courts Ordinance Detailed

BK141638 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Excerpts] The president today promulgated an ordinance empowering the center to set up special courts to try offenses against national security and territorial integrity. Under the ordinance, the center can also declare any area as terrorist affected. The declaration of any area as terrorist affected will remain in force for 6 months from the date of the issue of the notification. It (?may) also cover a similar period before that date. [sentence as heard]

Serious offenses under various acts have also been brought under the purview of the ordinance. These include removing railway lines, endangering life and property with explosives, damaging installations or buildings connected with water or power supply.

An official press communique says the law and order situation in some areas of the country is so disturbed due to insurgency or terrorist activity that peaceful and proper conduct of court work has become extremely difficult. The ordinance has been issued to deal with such a situation and ensure a fair and speedy trial of offenses. Special courts to be set up will be presided over by a serving district or session judge. He will be appointed by the central government with the concurrence of the chief justice of the state concerned. If a state recommends that the special court will be set up outside its territory in view of the law and order situation and in the interest of justice and fair trial, the central government may do so. The ordinance says the trial will generally be held in camera. The high court will have supervisory powers over the special court under the constitutional provisions. The supreme court will have the power to hear appeals against the order of the special court and to transfer any case from one court to another.

Gandhi Speaks to National Development Council

BK120955 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 12 Jul 84

[Excerpts] The prime minister has called for the fullest cooperation between the center and the states in the implementation of the seventh plan. Addressing the National Development Council

[NDC] in New Delhi today, Mrs Gandhi said that the plan is a joint venture of the states and the center. In undertaking the great tasks, the country faces diverse pulls and pressures. This is natural in a democratic federal set-up, but these pulls and pressures should not hide the fact that the plan can succeed only on the basis of the fullest cooperation between the states and the center. Mrs Gandhi said that the center has always acted without any discrimination against any state irrespective of the political complexion of its government. She said this is because the central government strongly believes that no partisan consideration should come in the way of matters of national development.

The opening session which began with Mrs Gandhi's address was attended by state chief ministers, central ministers, lieutenant governors of Union territories, and the governors of Punjab and Sikkim.

The chief ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tripura and West Bengal walked out of the NDC meeting, raising the question of dismissal of the Farooq Abdullah ministry [in Jammu and Kashmir]. The council later passed a unanimous resolution strongly condemning the action of the four chief ministers for trying to convert the NDC into a forum for partisan political propaganda. Their action violated the tradition of the NDC. The resolution said that they had also failed in the discharge of their duty and have done a disservice to the people of their states. The resolution was moved by the chief minister of Kerala, Mr Karunakaran, and seconded by the energy minister of Tamil Nadu, Mr S. Ramachandran.

Further Gandhi Comments

BK131700 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 13 Jul 84

[Excerpts] The national development council has unanimously approved a draft approach paper on the seventh plan. At the end of its 2-day deliberations in New Delhi today, it agreed that the planning commission may proceed to prepare the draft 5-year plan on 1985-90 on the basis of objective, program thrusts, and the target outlined in the approach paper.

Winding up the discussion, the prime minister said the center is trying its best to promote balanced regional development. India cannot maintain its unity if disparities between groups and regions are not reduced. She said there should be close cooperation between the center and the states in thinking and working because all major plans have to be implemented by the states.

Referring to the general economic situation, the prime minister said prudent management and planning have made the country's economy strong and stable. This, she said, has been acknowledged by all.

Mrs Gandhi said the international environment of financial assistance has been worsening. Pressures have been mounted on India to go in for market borrowing instead of concessional assistance. Mrs Gandhi said we cannot be stopped midway in our development. She, however, stressed that we must depend more on local resources sand local skill.

Mrs Gandhi denied that her government makes distinction between the states ruled by her party and those run by the opposition parties. All states are being given equal treatment. In this context, she said even Congress-I chief ministers are complaining that the center is showing favors to states governed by opposition parties.

Rao Hosts Banquet for Nepalese Counterpart

BK130704 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0240 GMT 13 Jul 84

[Text] India has urged Nepal to join in its efforts to keep the subcontinent tension free. Speaking at a dinner hosted in honor of the Nepalese foreign minister, Mr Padma Bahadur Khatri, in New Delhi last night, the external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao said both the countries are surreounded by areas of tension and disquiet and of war and violence. He said the traditional ties between India and Nepal are a positive factor in fruitful cooperation and stability in the region.

Earlier, the two foreign ministers held wide-ranging talks lasting about an hour. Mr Khatri said there are no serious problems and his country highly appreciates India's assistance in its developmental efforts. Referring to water resources, the two sides expressed satisfaction over the progress registered in the Karnali [hydroelectric] project. They felt that the momentum gained in this regard would help in reaching agreement on other river water resources. The two sides also noted that the work on the demarcation of the boundary is proceeding according to plan.

INDIAN EXPRESS on Sri Lanka's Tamil Issue

BK131258 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 4 Jul 84 p 6

[Editorial: "Clearing the Air"]

[Text] President Jayewardene's visit to Delhi has produced no intstant solution for the impasse in the all-party talks on the Tamil question in Sri Lanka. But it has, hopefully, cleared the air of Indo-Lankan misgivings arising out of statements and actions on either side that have evoked sharp reactions on the other. The President briefed Mrs Gandhi about the political sensitivities and ethnic tensions aroused in his country as a result of "hostile propaganda emanating from Indian territory, which was supportive of terrorism in Sri Lanka and alienating public opinion." He also emphasised the "negative consequences" of the Tamil United Liberation Front absenting itself from round-table committee meetings while making "provocative and unhelpful statements on a national issue from outside Sri Lanka" (an indirect reference to Tamil Nadu). The president cited certain specific instances of hostile activity by Sri Lanka Tamils on Indian soil though he declined to share these with the press. He also explained Sri Lankan fears of an Indian "invasion" because of statements calling for Indian military intervention made not only in Tamil Nadu but even in the Lok Sabha. He also laid to rest the angry retorts by his Prime Minister, Mr Premadasa, by citing a more positive statement made by him recently and wryly urging that this qualified him for a "pardon." The past is best forgotten and it would be as well for both sides to make a fresh

beginning. Mr Jayewardene has denied offering a base in Trincomalee or elsewhere to any foreign power. He also explained that Israeli experts might assist in "investigative" processes, whatever this might entail, while a private British agency had been contracted for "guerrilla warfare" training, following the unwillingness of various governments to assist on this score.

Mr Jayewardene, just returned from visits to the U.S. and the UK, has mooted new proposals that would bring together district councils in some representative manner short of regional councils that TULF favours. The Tamil groups should explore these ideas rather than reject them out of hand, provided there is assurance of a fair deal on language, education and employment. A step by step process seems to offer greater hope of success and confidence-build. Mr Jayewardene has also repeated his government's offer of an amnesty provided the Eelam and terrorist groups are prepared to accept a truce and lay down arms. Committed as it is, and must remain, to the unity and integrity of Sri Lanka, India's influence should be thrown in favour of persuading the Tamils to adopt a moderate and cooperative stance. This is now the relevant role for India's good offices.

Protest Made to FRG Over Prisoner's Release

BK121706 Delhi Domestic Service in English 1530 GMT 12 Jul 84

[Text] India has protested to the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for its decision to release Talwinder Singh, who is wanted in a murder case in Punjab. The protest was launched by the Indian ambassador to the FRG in Bonn. In the protest note, the Indian ambassador, Mr R.D. Sathe, expressed surprise and unhappiness at the decision.

'Natural Fuel Cycle' Tested by Atomic Scientists

BK151122 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] The natural fuel cycle has been successfully completed in the country. Only a few advanced nations have achieved this. The director of the Bhabha atomic research centre, Dr (Ayengar), gave this information to PTI in Bombay. Completion of fuel cycle is a sophisticated and lengthy process involving various stages. These include preparation of fuel elements and assembly for use in a reactor, burning the fuel in the reactor, recovering the radioactive byproducts from spent fuel and reprocessing the remaining fissionable material into new fuel elements. Dr (Ayengar) also said that the 100-mw Dhruva reactor designed and built indigenously to produce large quantities of isotopes will be commissioned in September.

BANGLADESH

Delhi Notes Criticism of Election Schedule

BK141034 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] In Bangladesh, the seven party alliance headed by Begum Khalida Zia, has criticized the government plan to hold parliamentary elections in December. A spokesman of the alliance said in Dhaka that the government has totally ignored the opposition call for end to martial law before the poll and the creation of an interim government to supervise the voting.

NEPAL

Foreign Minister Calls Indian Talks 'Satisfying'

BK141037 Delhi Domestic Service in English 0830 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] The foreign minister of Nepal, Mr Pandma Bahadur Khatri, has described his visit to India as very satisfying. Talking to newsmen on arrival at Katmandu, he said he discussed bilateral matters with the external affairs minister, Mr Narasimha Rao.

As already reported, India and Nepal are to set up a joint commission to promote bilateral cooperation. The foreign ministers of the two countries discussed the terms of reference and the scope of functioning of the proposed commssion during their meeting in New Delhi yesterday. They also agreed to explore the possibility of extending rail service from Raxaul in India to Birganj in Nepal.

SRI LANKA

AFP: Security Forces Arrest 37 Northern Tamils

BK160818 Hong Kong AFP in English 0748 GMT 16 Jul 84

[Text] Colombo, July 16 (AFP) — Thirty-seven suspected northern Tamil separatists were rounded up by security forces during a combing out operation early yesterday, bringing to 51 the total number of arrests since Friday, the *ISLAND* newspaper reported today.

Quoting Armed Forces sources, the report said the suspects were carrying rifles, pistols and pamphlets and that they had given vital inforamtion which would enable security forces to round up several more suspects.

The suspects under [words indistinct] are now being questioned by a joint Army-police team.

Additional details were unavailable as communications were disrupted following heavy rains and flooding.

Meanwhile, the government is on the alert for a possible rash of violence by northern Tamil separatists to mark the first anniversary of ethnic riots which broke out last July [words indistinct] people, mainly minority Tamils, died in the week-long nationwide riots.

The national [word indistinct] conference seeking solutions to the ethnic problem is scheduled to resume on July 23.

But the leader of the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF), Anura Bandaranaike Amirthalingam, has asked for postponement of the conference.

He has reportedly written to President Junius Jayewardene requesting that the date be changed as the secuirty conditions in the country may not be normal in view of the first anniversary of the riots.

National Security Minister Lalith Athulathmudali had earlier warned about possible trouble (?by late) July and placed security forces on alert.

Political sources said that Mr. Amirthalingam, now in the south Indian State of M[illegible]ras — the recent home of several TULF and militant seperatist leaders — is expected to arrive here tomorrow. The TULF is understood to be planning a day of peaceful protest on July 25 to mark the anniversary.

Arrests Termed 'Important Breakthrough'

BK141157 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] An important breakthrough in the antiterrorist campaign took place in the northern peninsula on Thursday — 15 terrorists were rounded up by security forces. Subsequent investigations revealed that 10 of them were hardcore terrorists from one of the major terrorist organizations in the country. Those arrested led to the recovery of several weapons, including rifles, pistols and bombs. The place where they were arrested resembled a minor bomb factory. Security service personnel also received a considerable amount of cash presumed to have been stolen from banks by the organization.

An important discovery was a batch of antigovernment posters which had been printed in a foreign country together with a large quantity of terrorist literature. It is believed that these arrests will constitute a substantial setback to the activities of the organization.

President Announces By-Elections, Views Democracy

BK151144 Colombo International Service in English 1030 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] President Jayewardene announced yesterday that by-elections would be held shortly to the four electorates of Milleniya, Kundasale, Trincomalee, and (Padaripura). Mr Jayewardene also said that people of Trincomalee and (Padaripura) [illegible] Eastern Province were against the division of the country.

Addressing a public meeting held after declaring open the new urban complex in Chilaw, the president disclosed that the Tamil United Liberation Front had requested the government not to

hold byelections for other electorates in the north because of the all-party conference. Mr Jayewardene said that the MP's of these electorates lost their seats because they failed to give oath accepting the country's unitary status.

He said that holding of elections from time to time to determine public opinion was one aspect of democracy. Another democratic privilege was to allow the opposition parties to engage in political activity and point out the shortcomings of the government through press criticism.

Mr Jayewardene, who pointed out that the United National Party pioneered the attempt to introduce democracy in Sri Lanka, expressed his government's and the party's commitment to preserve democracy in the country. He also said that the democratic system was the best-suited system of administration for the country although there were certain shortcomings.

Armed Forces Joint Staff Issues Communiques

No 1,787

LD131721 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 13 Jul 84

[Communique No 1,787 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] The combatants of Islam continued the battle on all fronts of the imposed war during the past 24 hours. The fighting was in the form of defensive actions and exchanges of fire between our forces and the Saddamist blasphemous forces. In some regions our forces discovered activities by enemy patrols and, by firing on them, halted their movements and forced them to retreat. At 0300 yesterday morning, for example, our patrols and observers recognized one enemy patrol group in the Qasr-e Shirin sector and another in the Khorramshahr sector. Through the retaliatory action of our patrol groups, the enemy patrol elements were routed and suffered some losses and casualties.

During an exchange of fire on the Arvand Rud front, our brave Gendarmerie warriors pounded positions and units of the enemy, halted the movements and engineering activities of the Iraqi forces, destroyed six weapons emplacements and troop bunkers and one enemy loader, and annihilated a number of enemy servicemen.

No 1,788

LD141722 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Communique No 1,788 of Joint Staff of Armed Forces of Islamic Republic of Iran]

[Text] During the past 24 hours the combatants of Islam stationed in the operational regions of Piranshah, Sar Dasht, Hajj 'Umran, Marivan, and Panjwin, and the border fronts of Bakhtaran and Ilam opened heavy fire on enemy forces and disrupted their operations and activities all along the lines of defense. In Sar-e Pol-e Zahab region, a patrol group of the enemy trying to approach positions of our units was soon detected; our forces inflicted casualties on them, forcing them to flee.

In the southern operational region, intense exchanges of fire continued in Zayd, Kushk, and Majnun. An enemy excavator and four foxholes and slit trenches were destroyed west of Arvand Rud, and two loaders sustained damage. Yesterday, the enemy's attempted air raids were foiled because of the alertness of the anti-aircraft defense units and tactical moves by fighter planes of the Islamic Republic of Iran's Air Force.

No 1,789

LD151558 Tehran IRNA in English 1555 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] July 15, IRNA — An invading Iraqi aircraft was downed by surface-to-air fire of the Iranian forces over Segaran Heights of the northwestern theatre at 20.00 hours local time (16.30 GMT) Friday, according to a military communique published here today. The communique published by the Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran and numbered 1,789 said also that sporadic artillery fire was traded between the Iranian forces and the Iraqi troops in the battlefronts of Piranshah, Sar Dasht, and Hajj 'Umran throughout yesterday during which many of the Iraqi emplacements were set ablaze while an indeterminate number of them were killed or wounded.

In battlefronts near Bakhtaran and Ilam, Iran's Muslim combatants checked enemy operations killing and wounding some of the Iraqi troops and destroying one Katyusha, one 120-mm mortar launcher and five enemy vehicles.

Elsewhere in southern battlefronts the Iranian Muslim fighters checked the movement of enemy forces throughout the region, Saturday. In Abadan, the Islamic forces concentrated their artillery fire on positions across the border setting ablaze nine artillery enemy emplacements and enemy trenches and killing or wounding many of the Iraqi troops.

On Saturday, 22 residential houses and shops in Abadan were damaged when they were subjected to enemy artillery fire from across the border. Six places in the city are said to have caught fire under enemy bombardment.

Khorramshahr, Abadan Damaged

LD151708 Tehran IRNA in English 1626 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Ahvaz, July 15, IRNA — Five civilians were wounded as a result of Iraqi artillery fire on the city of Khorramshahr over the past 24 hours. Also parts of the city were damaged.

Meanwhile, 8 houses and 14 shops were damaged in Abadan as the city was subjected to heavy barrages of Iraqi long-range artillery during the same period. Six places of the city caught fire, but were extinguished by the fire fighters.

Iraqi Offensive Foiled in Hawr al-Huwayzah

LD152023 Tehran IRNA in English 2011 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Tehran July 15 IRNA — The Iranian television tonight screened scenes from remnants of a defeated group of Iraqi soldiers who attempted an offensive against the Iranian forces in the Hawr al-Huwayzah region in the south of the country, on Saturday night. The television reporter held short interviews with a number of Iraqi soldiers taken captive in this futile enemy offensive. The film also displayed a number of enemy boats as well as considerable amounts of weapons seized from the Iraqi aggressors. In other scenes, the television showed bodies of several Iraqi soldiers drowned in the Hawr al-Huwayzah marshland.

According to the report, the attempted enemy attack was foiled thanks to the vigilance of the Islamic combatants of Iran stationed in the Khaybar operational region in the south of the country. A group of the enemy forces were drowned in the Hawr al-Huwayzah marshland and a number of them were taken captive.

Iraqi Foray Detailed

GF160536 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 16 Jun 84

[Text] A suicide attack by the Zionist Baghdad forces north of Hawr al-Huwayzah has been defeated. A part of the Baghdad forces consisting of a complete brigade the night before last lauched an attack on the Islamic forces but was completely defeated due to the alertness and good defense of our brave soldiers. Using motorboats, these forces tried to cross Hawr al-Huwayzah and attack the Islamic forces in the liberated territory but were foiled before they could do anything. The attacking force was annihilated; only a few of them survived to be captured by the Islamic fighters.

In a report last night which was broadcast by Iranian television, a portion of the annihilated Iraqi brigade was shown on television. The report showed the destroyed boats of the attacking force, a quantity of captured light arms, and the dead bodies of the Zionist soldiers who had fallen in the marshland of Hawr al-Huwayzah. The television also broadcast an interview with two Iraqi POW's captured by the Islamic forces.

Iraqi Claims of Attack on Two Ships Denied

LD141711 Tehran IRNA in English 1659 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] Bushehr, July 14, IRNA — An informed official at the governor general's office here today denied an Iraqi report that its Air Force had attacked two commercial ships in the Persian Gulf on Friday.

He said the Iraqi claim was "empty and baseless."

"During yesterday and today, no attacks have been carried out against ships in this waterway," he added.

Hashemi-Rafsanjani Invited To Visit Mecca

GF150550 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0530 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Following an invitation by Saudi officials to Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani to make a pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Mecca, the speaker of the Majlis said in a statement of thanks that such meetings can be beneficial to our relations.

Accepts Saudi Invitation

JN151426 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1500 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Citing a ranking diplomatic source in Damascus who declined to be identified, our correspondent in Damascus Louis Faris reports that Saudi King Fahd ibn 'Abd al-'Aziz has officially invited Iranian Majlis Speaker Hashemi-Rafsanjani to visit Saudi Arabia, that Rafsanjani has accpted the invitation, and that the visit will take place in the next few days. This is the first visit of its kind between the two countries.

Prime Minister Nominates Three to Ministries

LD141659 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] The Public Relations Office of the Islamic Majlis has announced: Prime Minister Mir Hoseyni-Musavi, in a letter to the Majlis requesting votes of confidence, has proposed Mr Kazeruni, Mr Reyshahri, and Mr Habibi as the new ministers for housing and urban development, information and security, and justice, respectively.

Justice Minister's Role Stressed

LD131925 Tehran IRNA in English 1619 GMT 13 Jul 84

[Text] Tehran, July 13, IRNA — The High Judicial Council has proposed to the Cabinet that Dr. Hasan Ebrahim Habibi be appointed minister of justice.

Hojjat Moqtada'i, a member and spokesman of the High Judicial Council in an interview with reporters here Thursday, stressed that the minister of justice participate in all sessions of the Council held for drawing up of the bills and that as far as the laws permit, more authority and jurisdiction would be granted him by the Council. He also said that the High Judicial Council has approved formation of judicial guidance groups whose task would be to work with the courts throughout the country providing counselling to the oppressed people.

Hojjat Moqtada'i said that about thirty issues have been discussed in the joint session of the Cabinet and the High Judicial Council regarding the judicial problems of the Cabinet. He further added that it was decided in this session to form a special committee for investigating the existing problems. The committee was chaired by Hojjat Moqtada'i and Mr. Aqazadeh, the state minister in charge of executive affairs.

Khomeyni Receives Justice Candidate

LD151134 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Hasan Habibi was this morning received by Imam Khomeyni, leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Khomeyni Appoints Ashtiani to Gendarmerie Post

LD141255 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1030 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] By order of Imam Khomeyni, leader of the revolution and founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hojjat ol-Eslam Haj Sheykh 'Ali Akbar Ashtiani has been appointed head of the Political-Ideological Office of the Islamic Republic of Iran Gendarmerie. The text of the order from the imam of the nation is as follows:

In His Almighty Name

His Excellency Hojjat ol-Eslam Mr Haj Sheykh 'Ali Akbar Ashtiani, may his favors be prolonged:

Your Excellency is hereby appointed head of the Political-Ideological Office of the Gendarmerie of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and God Almighty willing, you will solve problems in accordance with prescribed regulations and in line with the army Political-Ideological Office and the Police Department, and in the best possible manner perform the duties which have devolved on you.

All members of the Gendarmerie will cooperate with you and coordinate as necessary. I beseech God to grant Your Excellency success.

[Signed] Ruhollah al-Musavi al-Khomeyni, 14 July 84

Cabinet Session Hears Ministers' Reports

LD151941 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] The Cabinet had a session this morning chaired by Prime Minister Mir Hoseyn Musavi. At this session first the current affairs and politicial developments of the country were reviewed and discussed. Then various dimensions of the foreign policy of the Islamic Republic, including the principle of neither East nor West, were discussed. It was stressed that that principle was the most fundamental principle of our foreign policy. In fact, this principle provides encouragement for and assurance of the Islamic Republic of Iran's active and all round presence in international politics. At this session Oil Minister Gharazi reported on his participation in the recent OPEC meeting.

Later in the session interior Minister Nateq-Nuri proposed Mr Hoseyn (Noqrehcar-Shirazi) as the new governor general of Fars Province. This proposal was ratified by the Cabinet after his presence at the session. [as heard]

The Islamic Guidance Minister of Khatami turned in a report on the results of the hajj seminar. He thanked the clergymen and observers participating in the seminar who, in support of the remarks made by the prime minister, signed a pledge to give up their foreign exchange allowance. He said: The government of the Islamic Republic, in spite of the war with world arrogance, has increased the foreign exchange allowance for pilgrims by about 50 percent. Of course, considering the notable increase in the number of pilgrims this year, the allowance for each of them has decreased. He thanked the clergymen and observers of the hajj seminar for their spiritual support.

Prime Minister Chairs Reconstruction Council Session

LD160852 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 1630 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] The Supreme Council for Reconstruction and Rebuilding of the war-torn areas held a session under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Mir-Hoseyn Musavi this morning. At this session, the distribution and careful use of funds allocated for reconstruction and rebuilding were praised and the following allocations from the contingency fund for reconstruction and rebuilding of war-torn cities were approved:

Dezful 150 million rials

Nahavand: 100 million rials

Eslamabad: 100 million rials

Gilan-e Gharb: 30 million rials

Tabriz: 20 million rials

Also, it was decided that transport and logistic expenses of headquarters should be met from the funds allocated for each plan. The meeting decided that the reconstruction and rebuilding of Sumar should be the responsibility of Chahar-Mahal va Bakhtiari Province, and this decision was ratified by the council.

Majlis By-Elections To Be Held in 12 Constituencies

LD150842 Tehran IRNA in English 0819 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Tehran, July 15, IRNA — Candidates for 12 constituencies of the second Majlis elections should register for the by-elections scheduled for Thursday August 9, 1984, as of today July 15 for one week.

In an instruction to the governors of the 12 constituencies, Interior Minister 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri urged them to observe elections regulations.

The 12 constituencies are Esfahan, Faridan, Khomeyni-Shahr, Shiraz, Darab, Jiroft, Qaem-Shahr, Nur, Amol, Behshahr, Kuhdasht, and District of Shahriyar.

Cabinet Ministers Visit War Fronts

LD151915 Tehran IRNA in English 1704 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Ahvaz, July 15, IRNA — A group of Cabinet ministers arrived here today and left immediately for a visit to the war fronts.

Minister of Roads and Transport Mohammad Hadinezhad-Hoseyniyan, Minister of Energy Hasan Ghafuri-Fard, Minister of Islamic Revolutionary Guards Corps Mohsen Rafiqdust and Deputy Minister of Agriculture Tofiqy, left Ahvaz for the battlefields, accompanied by the governor of the southern province of Khuzestan.

Council of Experts Session Opens 14 July

GF140526 Tehran Domestic Service in Persian 0430 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] The Council of Experts session for the current year will open in Tehran today attended by its members. This year's session of the council, which will continue for 5 days, will be held at the Islamic Majlis building.

Those members of the Majlis who had been elected in the interim elections and endorsed by the Council of Guardians can also attend this session.

Assembly Chairman Speaks

LD141732 Tehran IRNA in English 1710 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] Tehran, July 14, IRNA — The Experts Assembly convened its annual session here today with a speech by Ayatollah Meshkini, the chairman of the assembly. After a report by the board of directors, a number of the council's internal rules were discussed and voted upon. The council is to follow up its debate Sunday morning.

It is the duty of the Experts Assembly to choose an individual or three to five fully qualified persons for council of leadership which must be then approved by the vote of the nation.

JANA: Attack on Beirut Libyan Bureau Denounced

LD151707 Tripoli JANA in English 1424 GMT 15 Jul 84

[Text] Tehran, Shawal 17, July 15, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY — The Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strongly denounced the terrorist attack that was carried out on the Libyan Arab People's Bureau in Beirut. A spokesman for the Islamic Republic of Iran's Foreign Ministry expressed his deep sorrow about the occurring of this attack.

He said carrying out such actions is in contrary to the interests of the Lebanese people.

The explosion, he stressed, is nothing but attempt against the forces that have played outstanding progressive fighting role in the region. He concluded by saying the attack is a conspiracy that serves the interests of Lebanon's enemies.

Radio Iran on Food Shortage at Warfronts

GF141616 (Clandestine) Radio Iran in Persian 1330 GMT 14 Jul 84

[Text] A physician who recently returned from the warfronts explained the current situation at the front in a talk with a Radio Iran correspondent. He said that long wait for decisions by the Khomeyni elements, the unbearable heat at the lines of operations, and the lack of foodstuff, have drastically lowered the morale of the personnel at the front.

According to him, the soldiers and volunteers only receive dry bread. Food supplies to the front are very slow.

So far, a number of men, especially the young children, have died at the front of hunger, sickness, heatstroke, and other ailments.

The food supplied to the front is so insufficient that it does not fill the bellies of the combatants. Skin diseases and other diseases are also prevalent. [sentence indistinct]

At present, deaths among personnel at the front, including the children, is no less than the loss of life suffered by men in actual combat. The physician warned that if conditions remained the same, the situation at the front will become [words indistinct].